

PC-CAM 550

Getting Started



Creative PC-CAM 550

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Version 1.0 April 2002

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Contents

	Introduction	
	About the Applications	٧
	Creative PC-CAM Center	
	Creative WebCam Monitor	٧
	Before You Begin	٧
	Package Contents	٧
	Third Party Software	
	README File	
	Minimum System Requirements	٧
	Updating Drivers	
	Document Conventions	۷İ
1	Installing PC-CAM 550	
-	PC-CAM 550 1	_,
	Buttons and LCD on PC-CAM 550	_;
	Buttons	
	LCD1	
	Inserting or Changing Batteries	
	Installing Software 1	
	In Windows 98/98 SE/Me	
	Verifying the installation in Windows 98/98 SE/Me	
	In Windows 2000	
	Verifying the installation in Windows 20001-	
	In Windows XP 1-	
	Verifying the installation in Windows XP1-	12
2	Using PC-CAM 550 as a Web Camera	
_	Starting PC-CAM Center	
	Capturing Images and Videos2	
	Taking a Photo in Preview Mode	

PC-CAM

	Recording a Video in Preview Mode	2-4 2-4 2-4
3	Using PC-CAM 550 as a Digital Camera Turning on the Camera Battery Low Taking Pictures Tips on Taking Good Pictures Downloading Images from the Camera Deleting Images from the Camera Docked Mode Undocked Mode	3-1 3-2 3-5 3-6 3-7 3-7
App	pendixes	
A	Technical Specifications Features and Specifications Driver and Operating System Compatibility Power Sensor Image Resolution	A-2 A-2 A-2

PC-CAM
550

	Undocked mode	A-3
	Light Sensitivity	A-3
	Video Formats	A-3
	Exposure Control	A-3
	Color Balance	A-3
	Color Matrix	A-4
	Port Compatibility	
	Flash	A-4
В	Troubleshooting	
	Problem Installing Software	B-1
	Problems Using PC-CAM 550	B-1
	Problems in Windows XP	B-4
С	Note on USB Compatibility	



Introduction



Introduction

Creative PC-CAM 550 is an Internet video camera that allows you to capture images in 24-bit (16.7 million) colors. It also records videos in full-color. The following are just some of the things you can do with your PC-CAM 550:

- □ **Video Conferencing**. Want to chat face-to-face with someone over the Internet? Used together with Microsoft NetMeeting, PC-CAM 550 allows you to have realtime videoconferencing with virtually anybody over the Internet!
- □ **Security Camera**. Worried that someone will use your computer without your knowledge? When used together with WebCam Monitor, PC-CAM 550 can function as a security camera, recording short videos of any movement in its field of view. It can also be programmed to take pictures automatically at regular intervals.
- □ **Portable Digital Camera**. As PC-CAM 550 is detachable, you can disconnect it from the computer and use it as a digital camera to take pictures anywhere you like! With PC-CAM 550's focus-free lens, you don't need to manually focus your camera. Downloading images from PC-CAM 550 is a breeze with PC-CAM Center.

Creative PC-CAM 550 is also compatible with Instant Messanger Software, such as MSN, AIM and Yahoo Messanger. Use the Creative PC-CAM 550 to add video to your favorite Instant Messaging software, such as MSN Messenger (included with your software package), Yahoo Messenger, or the Windows Messenger feature built in to Windows XP.



About the **Applications**

Creative PC-CAM Center

This powerful application lets you take pictures or record videos and store them in albums. Use this application to download pictures to your computer, when using PC-CAM 550 as a portable digital camera. You can also export pictures or videos to other programs, or send them as attachments in your e-mail message. There are various settings for you to adjust, allowing you to optimize the quality of your pictures and videos.

Creative WebCam Monitor

If you are thinking of putting a live snapshot of your office, garden, or even your hamster cage on your web page, use WebCam Monitor. Just point your camera, specify some settings, and WebCam Monitor does the rest, including automatically uploading the snapshots to your web site. WebCam Monitor can even act as a motion-detecting security system that automatically sends an e-mail message to notify you whenever anybody moves within the camera's field of view.



Before You Begin

Package Contents	Your package contains the following items: One PC-CAM 550 camera One PC-CAM 550 camera stand One wrist-strap One USB cable Four 1.5 V alkaline AAA batteries (twin pack) One PC-CAM 550 installation CD
Third Party Software	 □ Ulead[®] Photo Express[™] MCE 4.0 □ Adobe Acrobat □ Microsoft[®] NetMeeting
README File	☐ The README file on the PC-CAM 550 installation CD contains information not available at the time of printing. Read the file before connecting your PC-CAM to the computer.
Minimum System Requirements	 □ Genuine Intel[®] Pentium[®] 266 MHz, AMD[®] K6-2 300 MHz or faster processor □ 32 MB RAM (64 MB RAM recommended) □ 100 MB free hard disk space for installation of all software titles □ Available USB port or self-powered USB hub □ Microsoft Windows[®] 98, Windows 98 Second Edition (SE), Windows Millennium Edition (Me), Windows 2000 or Windows XP □ Display adapter that supports 16-bit color at a resolution of 800 x 450 pixels □ CD-ROM drive installed □ Sound Blaster[®] or other compatible audio card and microphone (required for videoconferencing)





Creative does not assume any costs charged to connect to the Internet.

Updating Drivers

Document Conventions

☐ Modem or LAN access to the Internet at 28.8 Kbps or faster (required for videoconferencing)

For optimal performance:

- ☐ Display adapter that supports 24-bit color at a resolution of 1024 x 768 pixels
- □ Sound Blaster 16 or higher, or other Windows-compatible audio card with fullduplex support for simultaneous two-way conversations

To download the latest drivers and file updates for PC-CAM 550, visit http://www.creative.com.

The following typographical conventions are used throughout this document:

Table 1: Document conventions

This	Represents
	This notepad icon indicates information that is of particular importance and should be considered before continuing.
	This alarm clock icon indicates that failure to adhere to directions may result in loss of data or damage to your computer.
<u> </u>	The warning sign indicates that failure to adhere to directions may result in bodily harm or life-threatening situations.



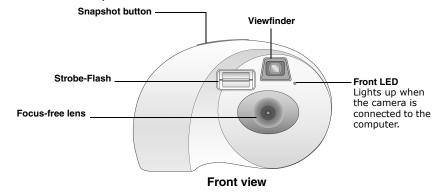
Installing PC-CAM 550



Installing PC-CAM 550

PC-CAM 550

Figure 1-1 shows you the front and back views of the camera.



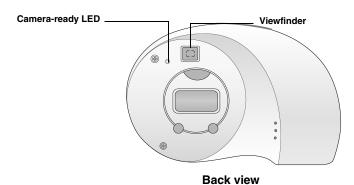


Figure 1-1: Front and back views of PC-CAM 550.





- To view pictures that you have taken while using the camera on-the-go, you must connect the camera to the computer and download the pictures using PC-CAM Center.
- As JPEG compresses an image according to its details, colors and compression ratio, the file size varies according to the picture taken.



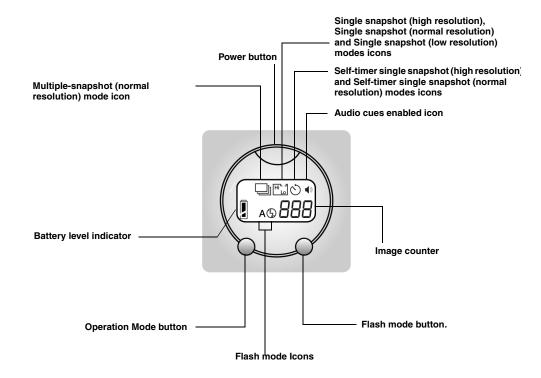


Figure 1-2: Buttons and LCD on PC-CAM 550.



Buttons and LCD on PC-**CAM 550**

The following section explains the functions of the buttons and LCD on your PC-CAM 550. Refer to Figure 1-1 and Figure 1-2 for the location of these buttons and LCDs on your camera.

Buttons

The following buttons are found on your PC-CAM 550:

Power button

To turn on your camera, press this button. You can only turn on your camera when it is disconnected from the computer.

To turn off your camera, press and hold this button for two seconds.

Note: The camera will turn itself off if it is left idle for three minutes.

Operation Mode button

This button will change the camera's operation mode each time it is pressed. There are six modes of operation: Single snapshot (normal resolution), Single snapshot (high resolution), Single snapshot (low resolution), Self-timer single snapshot (normal resolution), Self-timer single snapshot (high resolution) and Multiple snap shot. To erase all the data from your camera, press this button together with the Snapshot button.

□ Flash Mode button

This button will change the camera's flash mode each time it is pressed. There are two flash modes: Auto and Disabled. To delete the last file from the camera, press the **Flash Mode** button and **Snapshot** button simultaneously.

□ Snapshot button

This button is used for taking photos. It is a two-stage button. Pressing the button halfway (the first stage) will allow the camera to make the necessary adjustments for flash and exposure. Pressing the button completely (the second stage) allows the camera to take a picture.



LCD

The following LCD icons and symbols are found on your PC-CAM 550:

☐ Single snapshot (high resolution) [#1]

This icon indicates that you are in Single snapshot (high resolution) mode. In this mode, the camera captures images at 1280×960 pixels with software interpolation.

This icon indicates that you are in Single snapshot (normal resolution) mode. In this mode, the camera captures images at 640×480 pixels.

☐ Single snapshot (low resolution) 🗔

This icon indicates that you are in Single snapshot (low resolution) mode. In this mode, the camera captures images at 320 x 240 pixels.

□ Multiple snapshot □

This icon indicates that you are in the Multiple snapshot mode. In this mode, the camera captures five successive snapshots at 640 x 480 pixels.

 \square Self-timer single snapshot (high resolution) $\stackrel{\mathbb{H}^{\perp}}{\square}$ $\stackrel{\bullet}{\bigcirc}$

This icon indicates that you are in Self-timer single snapshot mode (high resolution). In this mode, the camera takes a high resolution snapshot after a specified length of time. Images are captured at 1280×960 pixels with software interpolation.

□ Self-timer single snapshot (normal resolution) □ ♡

This icon indicates that you are in Self-timer single snapshot mode. In this mode, the camera takes a normal resolution snapshot after a specified length of time. Images are captured at 640 x 480 pixels.

□ Auto Flash A¹/₂

This icon indicates that your camera is in Auto Flash mode. In this mode, the camera automatically detects whether there is sufficient light and activates the camera flash if needed.



- No batteries are required when the camera is connected to the computer.
- If the camera is to be connected to the computer for a long period of time, remove the batteries to prevent battery leakage.
- Make sure that you insert the batteries in the correct direction. If not, they may leak and cause damage to the camera.
- Do not mix old batteries with new ones or batteries of different types together.



- □ No Flash ⑤
 - This icon indicates that your camera's flash is disabled.
- □ Battery level indicator
 - This icon displays the battery level.
- □ Audio cues enabled
 - This icon indicates that the various audio cues built into your camera are enabled. When these cues are enabled, various beep sounds and shutter sounds are emitted. Press the **Operation Mode** button for two seconds to disable your camera's audio cues. To enable your camera's audio cues again, press the **Operation Mode** button for two seconds.
- □ Image Counter
 - Depending on which mode you are in, this counter displays the total number of photos left.





Inserting or Changing Batteries

For PC-CAM 550 to function as a portable digital camera when it is disconnected from the computer, you need to insert four 1.5 V AAA alkaline batteries into its battery compartment.

To insert or replace batteries:

- 1. Press the **Power** button for two seconds to turn off the camera.
- 2. Holding the camera in one hand, push the battery compartment cover catch inwards, and then lift the cover up with your fingertip as shown in Figure 1-3.
- 3. Remove the old batteries (if any).



Figure 1-3: Opening the battery compartment.

- 4. Insert the new batteries according to the directions indicated in the battery compartment, as shown in Figure 1-4.
- 5. Close the battery compartment cover and then push the catch outward to lock the compartment cover.

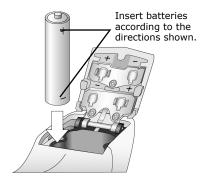


Figure 1-4: Inserting batteries.



Installing Software

Refer to the instructions for your computer's operating system.

For users of Windows 98, Windows 98 SE and Windows Me, see "In Windows 98/98 SE/Me" in the section that follows.

For users of Windows 2000, see "In Windows 2000" on page 1-9.

For users of Windows XP, see "In Windows XP" on page 1-11.

In Windows 98/98 SE/Me

- 1. Do not connect PC-CAM 550 to your computer before installing the drivers. If you accidentally begin installation with PC-CAM 550 connected, the **Add New Hardware Wizard** dialog box appears. Click the **Cancel** button.
- 2. Insert the PC-CAM 550 CD into your CD-ROM drive.
- 3. Click the names of the drivers and applications you want to install on your computer.
- 4. Follow the instructions on the screen to complete the installation. You may be asked, after an application is installed, if you want to restart your computer. Select **No** until all the drivers and applications are installed.





- The USB port(s) of certain computers may be found on the front panel instead of the back panel.
- You can also attach the camera to a self-powered USB hub.
- You can connect the camera while the computer is switched on.

5. Connect PC-CAM 550's USB cable to an available USB port on your computer (see Figure 1-5). Place PC-CAM 550 on top of your computer monitor or another flat surface. Windows automatically detects the device.

> USB port USB cable 63333)6° 9000000

Figure 1-5: Connecting PC-CAM 550 to the computer.

- i. If you are prompted to insert the Windows 98 CD, replace the PC-CAM 550 Installation CD with the appropriate CD.
 - Note: Windows 98 is available in various editions. Be sure to use the correct edition for your computer.
- ii. In the **Insert Disk** dialog box, click the **OK** button.
- iii. Follow the instructions on the screen.



- 6. When the **PC-CAM 550 Camera Configuration** dialog box appears, check the image in the **Video preview** pane. If it flickers or displays a series of dark bands, click the Cancel Flicker button.
- 7. Click the **Finish** button, and then restart your computer if you are prompted to do so.

Verifying the installation in Windows 98/98 SF/ Me

- 1. Right-click the **My Computer** icon on your desktop.
- 2. On the menu that appears, click **Properties**.
- 3. In the **System Properties** dialog box, click the **Device Manager** tab.
- 4. Click the plus (+) sign next to the **Imaging Device** icon. The entries Creative PC-CAM 550 (Still Image) and Creative PC-CAM 550 (Video) should appear. If they do not, repeat the steps in "In Windows 98/98 SE/ Me" on page 1-7.

In Windows 2000

- 1. Do not connect PC-CAM 550 to your computer before installing the drivers. If you accidentally begin installation with PC-CAM 550 connected, the Found **New Hardware Wizard** dialog box appears. Click the **Cancel** button.
- 2. Insert the PC-CAM 550 CD into your CD-ROM drive.
- 3. Click the names of the drivers and applications you want to install on your computer.
- 4. Follow the instructions on the screen to complete the installation. You may be asked, after an application is installed, if you want to restart your computer. Do not restart your computer until all the drivers and applications are installed.
- 5. Connect PC-CAM 550's USB cable to an available USB port on your computer (Figure 1-5). Place PC-CAM 550 on top of your computer monitor or another flat surface.

Windows automatically detects the device.



- 6. Two Digital Signature Not Found dialog boxes appear, one at a time, telling you that Creative PC-CAM 550 (Still Image) and Creative PC-CAM 550 (Video) (Figure 1-6) have been detected. Ignore the messages and click the Yes button in each dialog box.
- 7. When the **PC-CAM 550 Camera Configuration** dialog box
 appears, check the image in the **Video preview** pane. If it
 flickers or displays a series of
 dark bands, click the **Cancel Flicker** button.



Figure 1-6: Digital Signature Not Found dialog box.

8. Click the **Finish** button, and then restart your computer if you are prompted to do so.

Verifying the installation in Windows 2000

- 1. Right-click the **My Computer** icon on your desktop.
- 2. On the menu that appears, click **Properties**.
- 3. In the **System Properties** dialog box, click the **Hardware** tab.
- 4. Click the **Device Manager** button. A window appears.
- Click the plus (+) sign next to the Imaging Device icon.
 The entries Creative PC-CAM 550 (Still Image) and Creative PC-CAM 550 (Video) should appear.

Click the plus (+) sign next to the **Universal Serial Bus controllers** icon. The entry **Creative PC-CAM 550 (Composite)** should appear. If the entries do not appear, repeat the installation procedure in "In Windows 2000" on page 1-9.



In Windows XP

- 1. Do not connect PC-CAM 550 to your computer before installing the drivers.
 - If you accidentally begin installation with PC-CAM 550 connected, the **Found New Hardware Wizard** dialog box appears. Click the **Cancel** button.
- 2. Insert the PC-CAM 550 CD into your CD-ROM drive.
- 3. Click the names of the drivers and applications you want to install on your computer.
- 4. Follow the instructions on the screen to complete the installation. You may be asked, after an application is installed, if you want to restart your computer. Do not restart your computer until all the drivers and applications are installed.
- 5. Connect PC-CAM 550's USB cable to an available USB port on your computer (Figure 1-5). Place PC-CAM 550 on top of your computer monitor or another flat surface. Windows automatically detects the device.
- 6. When the **Found New Hardware Wizard** dialog box appears, select **Install the software automatically (Recommended)**, and then click the **Next** button. Installation will be complete in a while.
- 7. When three **Hardware Installation** dialog boxes appear, one at a time, click the **Continue Anyway** button.
- 8. When the **PC-CAM 550 Camera Configuration** dialog box appears, check the image in the **Video preview** pane. If it flickers or displays a series of dark bands, click the **Cancel Flicker** button.
- 9. Click the **Finish** button, and then restart your computer if you are prompted to do so.



Verifying the installation in Windows XP

- 1. Right-click the **My Computer** icon on your desktop.
- 2. On the menu that appears, click **Properties**.
- 3. In the **System Properties** dialog box, click the **Hardware** tab.
- 4. Click the **Device Manager** button. A window appears.
- Click the plus (+) sign next to the Imaging Device icon.
 The entries Creative PC-CAM 550 (Still Image) and Creative PC-CAM 550 (Video) should appear.

Click the plus (+) sign next to the **Universal Serial Bus controllers** icon.

The entry **Creative PC-CAM 550 (Composite)** should appear.

If the entries do not appear, repeat the installation procedure in "In Windows XP" on page 1-11.



2 Using PC-CAM 550 as a Web Camera



Using PC-CAM 550 as a Web Camera

Starting PC-CAM Center



If PC-CAM Center does not recognize the camera correctly, see Appendix A, "Troubleshooting."

PC-CAM Center is an easy-to-use application that enables you to take pictures and record short videos with the PC-CAM 550 camera. You can also view pictures and videos, create and manage albums, and download image files from your camera.

To start PC-CAM Center, do one of the following:

- □ Click Start -> Programs -> Creative -> Creative PC-CAM -> PC-CAM Center.
- ☐ Press the **Snapshot** button on the camera.
- ☐ If, during installation, you clicked the option for PC-CAM Center to launch automatically at Windows startup, you will have an icon on your taskbar. Click this icon.
- ☐ You can start PC-CAM Center either in **Digital Camera** or **Live Video** mode from the menu that appears when your PC-CAM is auto detected.



After PC-CAM Center is started, the PC-CAM Center screen similar to Figure 2-1 appears. The following sections describe the more commonly used operations. For more details on how to use PC-CAM Center, see the section "Starting PC-CAM Center Help" on page 2-5.



Figure 2-1: PC-CAM Center screen.

Capturing Images and Videos

With PC-CAM Center, you can take photos and record videos in two modes — with and without a preview. The preview mode is active by default.

For instructions on how to take a photo or record a video without a preview, refer to the PC-CAM Center Help file. To launch PC-CAM Center Help, see "Starting PC-CAM Center Help" on page 2-5.



Taking a Photo in Preview Mode

To take a photo in the default preview mode:

- 1. In the PC-CAM Center window, click the Live Video button. The current camera view is displayed in the **Viewing** window.
- 2. In the **Save Photo in** box, select the destination album for your photo.
- 3. If the **Save automatically** check box is selected, click to clear it.
- 4. To capture the image in the viewing window, click the **Snap Photo** button at the bottom of the window.

The image is captured but not saved. A preview of the photo is shown at the bottom-left corner of the **Live Video** window.

5. Click the **Save** button. The photo is added to the destination album.

Recording a Video in Preview Mode

To record a video in the default preview mode:

- 1. In the PC-CAM Center window, click the Live Video button. The current camera view is displayed in the Viewing window.
- 2. In the **Video Size** box, select a suitable resolution.
- 3. In the **Save Video in** box, select the destination album for your photo.
- 4. If the **Save automatically** check box is selected, click to clear it.
- 5. To start recording a video, click the **Capture video** button. The button starts blinking to indicate that recording is now in progress.
- 6. To stop the recording, click the button again. The button stops blinking. The video is captured as an AVI file but is not saved.
- 7. To preview the video, click the **Play** button on the bottom-left corner of the **Live** Video window.

After you have previewed the video, and have decided that you want to save the video, click the Save button.

8. The video capture is added to the destination album.



Viewing a Photo

To view a photo you have taken:

- 1. Click the My Album button. PC-CAM Center is now in My Album mode.
- 2. In the **My Album** box, click the **My Photo** folder and then click the album that contains the photos that you want to view.

The album's thumbnails are displayed in the **Thumbnails** window.

3. Double-click the thumbnail of the image that is displayed in the **Thumbnails** window.

The image is displayed in the PC-CAM Center **Viewing** window, in its actual size. If you are not satisfied with the result, you can select a higher resolution, and then capture the image again.

Viewing a Video

To view a video you have taken:

- 1. Click the My Album button. PC-CAM Center is now in My Album mode.
- 2. In the **My Album** box, click the **My Video** folder and then click the album that contains the video that you want to view.

The album's thumbnails are displayed in the **Thumbnails** window.

3. Double-click the thumbnail of the video that is displayed in the **Thumbnails** window.

The video is displayed in the PC-CAM Center **Viewing** window, in its actual size. If you are not satisfied with the result, you can select a higher resolution, and then capture the video again.

Reactivating the Camera

If your computer goes into standby mode, your camera will go into suspend mode. You can reactivate the camera and computer using the following methods:

- ☐ Move the mouse or press any key on the keyboard.
- ☐ Press the camera's **Snapshot** button.



Starting PC-CAM Center Help

This Help file contains instructions on how to use PC-CAM Center to take pictures and record short videos. It also teaches you how to change settings so as to achieve optimum quality for your pictures and videos.

To start the Help file:

- 1. Click the Creative logo at the top left corner of PC-CAM Center's main window.
- 2. On the **PC-CAM Center** menu, click **Help**.



3 Using PC-CAM 550 as a Digital Camera



Using PC-CAM 550 as a Digital Camera

You can also use PC-CAM 550 as a portable digital camera when it is not connected to your computer.

Note: Remember to insert four 1.5 V AAA alkaline batteries into the camera's battery compartment.

Turning on the Camera

To turn on the camera, do the following:

Press the Power button on the camera. One beep indicates that your camera has been turned on.

Battery Low

When the battery is running low, the following occurs:

- ☐ The battery-low indicator (as shown on the right) is displayed.
- ☐ When the **Snapshot** button is pressed, two warning beeps are heard.



Taking Pictures



- You can only turn on the camera when it is disconnected from the computer.
- If there is insufficient memory in the camera, the counter will start flashing "000" immediately.
- When the counter starts flashing "000," you cannot take any more pictures until you have cleared the camera's memory by deletina existina pictures.
- The Multiple-snapshot mode consumes more battery power.
- The camera turns itself off if it is left idle after three minutes.

- 1. Make sure the USB cable is unplugged from the camera.
- 2. Press the Power button on the camera. Two beeps will follow. When the camera is first turned on, it is in the default state.

The following default LCD icons are displayed:

- ☐ The default operation mode will be displayed: Single Snapshot (normal resolution, 640 x 480 pixel) mode.
- ☐ The default flash setting will be displayed: Autoflash.
- ☐ The number of images you have left is shown by the image counter on the LCD.
- 3. To change the flash mode of the camera, press the **Flash Mode** button:
 - □ Auto A4

In this mode, the camera automatically detects whether there is sufficient light and activates the camera flash if needed.

□ Disabled ③

In this mode, the flash is turned off.

- 4. To change the operation mode of the camera, press the **Operation Mode** button:
 - □ Single snapshot (high resolution)

 □

Select this mode if you want to take single snapshots at high resolution. Images are captured at a resolution of 1280 x 960.

Select the flash mode that you want, then press the **Snapshot** button to take a snapshot. The front red LED blinks once and the camera-ready green LED blinks when the image is stored into memory, and turns on after the image is saved.





When the audio cues of your camera are enabled, a warning sound is emitted if the lighting conditions are inadequate for a snapshot.

This is the default mode once the camera is turned on.

Select this mode if you want to take single snapshots at normal resolution. Images are captured at a resolution of 640 x 480.

Select the flash mode that you want and then press the **Snapshot** button to take a snapshot. The front red LED blinks once and the camera-ready green LED blinks when the image is stored into memory, and turns on after the image is saved.

☐ Single snapshot (low resolution)

Select this mode if you want to take single snapshots at low resolution. Images are captured at a resolution of 320 x 240.

Select the flash mode that you want and then press the **Snapshot** button to take a snapshot. The front red LED blinks once and the camera-ready green LED blinks when the image is stored into memory, and turns on after the image is saved.

\square Self-timer single snapshot (high resolution) \square

Select this mode if you want a high resolution snapshot to be taken after a delay of ten seconds. Images are captured at a resolution of 1280 x 960. You can use this feature to take pictures of yourself.

Press the **Snapshot** button to take a delayed snapshot. The front LED light will blink with increasing speed and then proceed to take a snapshot in the Single snapshot mode.

The delay time is ten seconds.

Note: You can cancel the snapshot while the camera is counting down by pressing the Snapshot button again.



\square Self-timer single snapshot (normal resolution) $\square \upharpoonright \lozenge$

Select this mode if you want a normal resolution snapshot to be taken after a delay of ten seconds. Images are captured at a resolution of 640 x 480. You can use this feature to take pictures of yourself.

Press the **Snapshot** button to take a delayed snapshot. The front LED light will blink with increasing speed and then proceed to take a snapshot in the Single snapshot mode.

The delay time is ten seconds.

Note: You can cancel the snapshot while the camera is counting down by pressing the **Snapshot** button again.

■ Multiple snapshot ■

Select this mode if you want to take a series of five successive snapshots at normal resolution.

Press the **Snapshot** button once to take the snapshots. The front red LED will light up and the camera-ready green LED blinks, indicating that the images are being stored to memory.

The flash is automatically disabled in this mode.

The image counter displays that the total number of snapshots left.

5. Aim the camera at the desired object, use the camera's viewfinder to verify that the object is in the camera's view.

Note: The object should be at least 80 cm (31 inches) from the camera.

- 6. Hold the camera still and press the **Snapshot** button.
- 7. The front red LED lights up and the camera-ready green LED indicator blinks. At this point, do not shake the camera. When the picture has been taken, the indicator turns off.

The picture taken is stored in the camera's memory, and the counter value decreases accordingly, depending on the resolution of the picture taken.

- 8. To take another picture, repeat steps 4 through 6.
- 9. To turn off the camera, press and hold the **Power** button for two seconds.



- · The counter value normally decreases by one after a picture is taken.
- Depending on the quality of the picture, the counter value may also decrease by two, or not at all.



Tips on Taking Good Pictures

There are a few tips to note when taking a good picture.

□ Bright lighting

Avoid taking pictures with bright light sources all around the object. These lights will create "hotspots," which will affect the quality of the picture.

□ Bad lighting

When indoors or outdoors, be sure there is enough light falling onto the object. Avoid taking pictures of objects in shadows, especially when the light source (for example, sun or spotlight) is directly behind the object.

□ Distance

This camera is focus free but be sure the minimum distance between camera and object is not less than 80 cm (31 inches). Any closer, the close-up images may appear blurry.

Fill the viewfinder with the object.

□ Using Flash

When in a dimly lit environment, be sure that the distance between camera and object is less than 2.5 meters (8 feet) but greater than 1.5 meters (5 feet). However, objects in the background that are more than 2.5 meters (8 feet) away from the camera may appear fuzzy. Objects that are less than 1.5 meters (5 feet) may appear overexposed.

□ Moving objects

Fast-moving objects may appear blurry in your picture. Unless a blurry or out-of-focus effect snapshot is intended, avoid taking fast-moving objects.

□ Camera shake

Shaking the camera while taking pictures may also result in a blurry picture. So keep your hands steady at all times for sharp, clear pictures. To avoid shaking the camera, gently squeeze the Snapshot button. If necessary, use both hands to hold the camera while pressing the **Snapshot** button.



Downloading Images from the Camera

To download the pictures you have saved, connect the camera to your computer and then use PC-CAM Center to download the files.

To download pictures:

- 1. Connect PC-CAM Center to your computer and start PC-CAM Center.
- 2. Click the **Digital Camera** button. Temporary copies of the PC-CAM files are created automatically, and displayed as thumbnails in the thumbnails window.
- 3. Click the **Select All** button to select all the files.
- 4. Click the **Transfer To** button. The **Transfer** dialog box appears.
- 5. Click the **Photo** tab containing the destination media album you want. Only the tab belonging to the media of the selected files will appear.
- 6. Click the album you want to transfer the files to.
- 7. Click the **OK** button.



Deleting Images from the Camera

After downloading the picture files safely into your album, delete them from your camera to make space for new pictures to be stored.

Docked Mode

When PC-CAM 550 is connected to your computer, do the following to delete images:

- 1. In the **PC-CAM Center** window, click the **Digital Camera** button. A thumbnail view of the pictures stored in the camera's memory is displayed.
- 2. To delete a single image, click the thumbnail view of the picture that you want, and then click the **Delete** button on the toolbar. To delete all the images, click the **Select All** button, and then click the **Delete** button on the toolbar. All the selected files are removed from the camera's memory.

Undocked Mode

When PC-CAM 550 is connected to your computer and you are using it as a portable digital camera, do the following to delete all the files in your camera's memory:

- 1. In any mode, press the **Snapshot** button and **Operation Mode** button simultaneously for more than two seconds to delete all the files from the camera.
- 2. A beep sound is heard when the memory is cleared and the LCD displays the available frames in that particular mode.

To clear the last image recorded in your camera, do the following:

- 1. In any mode, press the **Snapshot** button and **Flash Mode** button simultaneously for more than two seconds to delete the last photo from the camera.
- 2. A beep sound is heard when the last file is cleared. The value on the camera's **Image** counter increases by one.



A Technical Specifications



Technical Specifications

This section lists the specifications of your PC-CAM 550 camera.

Features and **Specifications**

- □ Color VGA (640 x 480 pixels) CMOS image sensor □ 8 MB of on-board non-volatile memory for image storage
- ☐ LCD counter display to indicate number of pictures left and mode of stills captured
- ☐ Snapshot button for taking pictures when used as a stand-alone camera
- ☐ LEDs to indicate powered-on state and camera-readiness state
- ☐ High-quality, focus-free, scratch-resistant glass lens
- □ Optical viewfinder
- Operation Mode button for selection of four different modes of still capture
- When detached:
 - Capable of capturing up to:
 - 88 still pictures JPEG format (single snapshot high resolution software interpolated, 1280 x 960 pixels)
 - 88 still pictures JPEG format (single snapshot normal resolution, 640 x 480 pixels)
 - 195 still pictures JPEG format (single snapshot low resolution, 320 x 240 pixels)

Note: In single snapshot high resolution mode and single snapshot normal resolution mode, the number of still pictures captured is the same because the image is in VGA format and interpolation is done after the image is downloaded to the computer.

- By default, images are stored in JPEG format
- Draws power from four AAA batteries

Note: Battery life depends on mode and battery type. Four AAA alkaline batteries can last for up to 450 snapshots with flash and 3000 snapshots



without flash.

- Auto shut-off after three minutes of idle time
- □ When attached:
 - Captures video at up to 30 frames per second at image resolutions of 320 x 240 and 160 x 120 and up to 15 frames per second at 640 x 480
 - Captures still images in 24-bit color at all image resolutions up to 640 x 480
- ☐ Attaches to the computer via the Universal Serial Bus (USB) port

Driver and **Operating** System Compatibility

- □ USB model supports Windows 98, Windows Me, Windows 2000 and Windows XP
- ☐ Microsoft Windows Image Acquisition (WIA) support
- □ WDM MiniDriver for DirectShow, and Video For Windows compatibility
- ☐ TWAIN support
- ☐ Standard interface works with virtually all camera applications including Microsoft NetMeetina
- ☐ Microsoft Still Image (STI) support

Power

From USB port or self-powered USB hub (powered by an external power source).

Sensor

CMOS image sensor

Image Resolution

Docked mode

- ☐ Still Mode
 - 640 x 480
 - 352 x 288
 - 320 x 240



- 176 x 144
- 160 x 120
- □ Video Mode
 - 640 x 480
 - 352 x 288
 - 320 x 240
 - 176 x 144
 - 160 x 120

- Undocked mode
- □ 1280 x 960 (with software interpolation)
- □ 640 x 480
- □ 320 x 240
- Light Sensitivity

10 lux

Video Formats

- □ 24-bit RGB
- ☐ 4:2:0 YUV Planar
- ☐ 16-bit RGB

Exposure Control

Automatic (optional manual control with software)

Color Balance

Automatic (optional manual control with software)



Preset and integral to camera Color Matrix

Port Compatibility Universal Serial Bus port

Flash

Between 1.5 meters (5 feet) and 2.5 meters (8 feet) effectiveness



B Troubleshooting



Troubleshooting

This appendix provides solutions to problems you may encounter during installation or normal use.

Problem Installing Software

The setup program for PC-CAM 550 does not run automatically after you insert the Installation CD into the drive.

The AutoPlay feature in your Windows system may not be enabled.

To install the software from the CD:

- 1. Leave the installation CD in the CD-ROM drive.
- 2. Click Start -> Run.
- 3. In the **Open** box, type **D:\CTRUN\CTRUN.EXE** (where D: represents your CD-ROM drive).
- 4. Follow the instructions on the screen to complete the installation.

Problems Using PC-CAM 550

There is no USB port available to connect the USB cable.

Do one of the following:

- ☐ Unplug the device currently connected to the USB port.
- ☐ Add a self-powered USB hub.
- □ Add a PCI USB card.



An application reports that the video driver is already in use, or that the camera cannot be found.

Do the following:

The camera is not properly connected. To resolve this problem, ensure that the
camera's USB connector is inserted, and that the USB host controller is enabled
in your computer's BIOS. Refer to your computer's documentation for information
on the BIOS.

☐ Reinstall the video capture drivers and reboot.

The image is too bright even though exposure and brightness levels have been adjusted.

The amount of light entering the camera has exceeded the exposure control limit. There may be a very bright object in the camera's view.

Avoid pointing the camera at very bright objects (for example, sunlight, anticipated light sources, or highly reflective surfaces).

Insufficient system resources reserved for the USB port, causing the computer to be unable to function.

There are too many devices in the computer, causing IRQ conflicts with the computer's USB controller.

Do the following:

- 1. Remove some devices from the computer.
- 2. Restart the computer. The computer will automatically re-allocate the resources.



When the camera is connected to the computer, pressing the Snapshot button does not start an application.

The application to be activated has not been pre-selected.

Do the following:

- 1. Click Start -> Settings -> Control Panel.
- 2. Double-click the Scanners & Cameras icon. The Scanners & Cameras **Properties** dialog box appears.
- 3. Click the **Devices** tab.
- 4. Click Creative PC-CAM 550 (Video), and then click the Properties button. The Creative PC-CAM 550 (Video) Properties dialog box appears.
- 5. Click the **Events** tab.
- 6. Make sure that the **Disable device events** check box is not selected.
- 7. In the Camera events box, click Open Application.
- 8. In the **Send to this application** box, click **PC-CAM Center** and/or other applications that you want to activate by pressing the **Snapshot** button.
- 9. Make sure that you have selected an application for taking pictures.



If you select more than one application, you will be prompted to choose one of them when you press the **Snapshot** button.



Problems in Windows XP

AHardwareInstallationerrormessageappearsonaWindowsXPoperatingsystem when a driver is being installed.

At the time of this product's release, Microsoft strongly encouraged companies to submit their hardware solutions for certification. If a hardware device driver is not submitted, or does not qualify, for Microsoft certification, a warning message similar to the one below appears.



You may see this message when installing this driver. If you do, you may choose to click the **Continue Anyway** button. Creative has tested this driver on Windows XP, and it does not impair or destablize your computer.

If you need more XP-related information, go to the product web site's Help or speak with Creative Technical Support staff.



C USB Compatibility



Note on USB Compatibility

While testing PC-CAM 550 on PC motherboards with integrated Universal Serial Bus (USB) ports, we encountered a small number of motherboards that do not meet the USB specification exactly. These and other non-USB-compliant motherboards may not operate correctly with PC-CAM 550. Fortunately, the manufacturers of some of these motherboards have released new versions of motherboards or BIOS to address the problem.

If the setup program warns you that your motherboard's USB port is incompatible with PC-CAM 550, or if the camera does not work on your system and you suspect that the problem may be related to your PC's USB port, the following is a list of available options:

- 1. Contact your PC vendor. Your PC vendor may be able to upgrade your motherboard or its BIOS to a newer version that addresses USB incompatibilities.
- 2. Use a PCI host adapter that provides USB connectors. If you are not able to upgrade your motherboard or its BIOS, we recommend this approach.
- 3. Attach the PC-CAM 550 to a powered USB hub. Some USB devices (such as monitors) also operate as powered USB hubs; you can also buy dedicated powered USB hubs which are to be attached to your PC's USB port. However, in some cases, attaching a powered USB hub to a non-USBcompliant USB motherboard connector will not solve the problem.



To look for a USB compatible product, you can visit the product search page at the official USB Web site: http:// www.usb.org/app/ search/products.